GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:266
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2000
TARGET FOR MASS LITERACY
AKHILESH SINGH;ANANTA NAYAK

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to make the right to education as a fundamental right;

(b) if so, the States lagging behind in achieving the target of mass literacy and the reasons therefore;

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to bring them at par with the other States in this regard;

(d) whether the Union Government have discharged their duty of formulating a meaningful policy for mass literacy;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the time by which the Union Government would formulate a policy in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) : Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f): A statement is laid on the table of the House. Statement

Statement referred to in parts (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 266 for 14.03.2000 regarding Target for Mass Literacy by Shri Kunwar Akhilesh Singh and Shri Ananta Nayak.

(b) A total of nine States had literacy rates below the national average of 52.2% as per 1991 census. These States are Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Some of the main reasons identified for low levels of Mass Literacy in these States are:

- Poverty;
- High rate of population growth; and
- Social barriers standing in the way of female education.

(c) The Government is taking a number of steps to bring the above States at par with other States. These include programmes launched to promote universalisation of elementary education, viz. the National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education, Operation Blackboard, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Non- Formal Education Programme, Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi Projects. A large number of programmatic State specific initiatives have also been taken to improve Elementary Education. These include setting up of Education Guarantee Centres appointment of Shiksha Karmis, Decentralization of Management of elementary Education to Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies and provision for Village Education Committees and School Management Committees, etc. The National Literacy Mission had taken the initiative to launch Literacy programmes in all these States. In order to strengthen the resource support for preparation of literacy material and training of literacy functionaries, State Resource Centres have been setup. Jana Shikshan Sansthans to cater to the Educational and Vocational needs of adults have also been established.

(d) & (e) : Yes. Sir. The Government proposes to launch the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to bring all children in the age group of 6-14 years to school/education guarantee centers/back to school camp by 2003 and to provide 5 years of primary schooling by the academic year 2007 and 8 years of elementary schooling by the academic year 2010.

In order to achieve the aim of attaining the sustainable, thresh-hold literacy rate of 75% by the year 2005, the Union Cabinet has taken major policy decisions in its meeting held on 30th November, 1999. As per the Cabinet decision, a clear out policy for achieving the aim of sustainable level of literacy by the year 2005 has been formulated. The chief components of the new policy are:
- Integration of phases of Total Literacy and Post Literacy.
- Delegation of powers to State level Literacy Mission authorities.
- Enlarging the scope of Continuing Education.
- Strengthening of Jana Shikshan Sansthans and allowing them to operate in rural areas.
- Revitalising of State Resource Centres for preparation of better teaching learning material and improved quality of training.

(f): Does not arise.